மாண்புமிகு பேரவைத் துணைத் தலைவர்: வினாக்கள்-விடைகள் முடிவுற்றன.

குறிப்பு : ஓர் உரையின் தொடக்கத்தில் வெள்ளிக் குறி * இடப்பட்டிருந்தால் அவ்வுரை உறுப்பினரால் சரிபார்க்கப்பட்டது என்பதைக் குறிக்கும்.

2. அறிவிப்பு

பேரவை உறுப்பினர் திரு எஸ். எம். துரைராஜ் விடுதலை செய்யப்பட்டது குறித்து

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER : I have to announce to the House the following telegram dated 21st March 1973 that I have received from the Superintendent of Police, Madurai South—

"Thiru S. M. Durairaj, M.L.A., Tiruvellore, arrested to-day at 11·50 a.m at Madurai was released to-day at 6-30 p.m. as per Government Orders dropping charges against him".

3. அவையுரிமைப் பிரச்சினை

பேரவையில் முதலமைச்சர் அவர்கள் டில்லி தமிழ் நாடு இல்லம் பற்றிய வினாவுக்கு கூறிய விடையை தென்னகம் நாழிதழில் திரித்து வெளியிட்டிருப்பது குறித்து

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honb'le Members are aware that yesterday Thiru N. Veerasamy, M.L.A. raised a matter of privilege against the Tamil daily "Thennagam" and I had said that I will give my ruling to-day.

Thiru Veerasamy in his notice has contended that the paper had no only distorted certain proceedings of the House, but also has attributed motives to the Hon'ble Chief Minister and has also published certain matters as having taken place in the House even though actually it had not happend, and hence the paper had committed breach of privilege.

All the Hon'ble Members who spoke after Thiru Veerasami were of the opinion that the Press should have freedom of criticism, but it should be a fair criticism. There was difference of opinion as to the fairness of the criticism, but all agreed that the paper could have avoided using the words that were objected to by Thiru Veerasami. What is fair criticism is a matter of opinion, but I am sure Hon'ble Members will agree when I say that when a criticism is in dignified language, does not presume things and attribute motives, it could be taken to be fair.

The Hon'ble Chief Minister yesterday explained how the paper had published things in an undignified way, had presumed things and had attributed motive to him.

The paper had given a caption as follows :—

சட்டசபைக்கு முன்னால் அப்பட்டமான உண்மைகளை மறைக்கும் சத்புத்திரர்கள்

It has gone on to criticise on the basis of the above presumption that truth is being suppressed in the House.

By saying *சட்டமன்ற உறுப்பினர்கள் சாதாரணமானவர்கள், ஒன்றும் தெரியாதவர்கள் என்று நினைத்துக் கொண்டு the paper had attributed motive to the Hon'ble Chief Minister who is also a member of the House. By publishing the words தனக்கே உரித்தான திமிரினால் சட்டசபைக்கு தவறான தகவலைத்தந்ததுடன் the paper had given incorrect version and has criticised the Hon'ble Chief Minister by using undignified words.

Sir Erskine May says " to print or publish any books or libels reflecting on the proceedings of the House is a high violation of the rights and privileges of the House, and indignities offered to the House by words spoken or writings published reflecting on its character or proceedings have been constantly punished by both the Lords and Commons upon the principle that such acts tend to obstruct the Houses in the performance of their functions by diminishing the respect due to them.

Reflections upon Members, the particular individuals not being named or otherwise indicated, are equivalent to reflections on the House ".

Hence I conclude that the comments of the paper were not fair, the paper had attributed motive to the Hon. Chief Minister, it had also published incorrect and distorted version of the proceedings of the House and has also used undignified language in offering its comments.

I, therefore, hold that a *prima facie* case of breach of privilege has been made out.

However, the House should best consult its own dignity and allow the matter to rest with a warning to the paper to be more careful in future.

I would like to take this opportunity to inform the Press that the best criticism is one which is given in a dignified way as is being done now by most of the leading papers. I hope other papers will emulate their example, and offer thier co-operation in maintaining the dignity and decorum of Parliamentary democracy.